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NEWS TIPS

MILLENNIUM FEARS SPRING FROM MISTAKEN INTERPRETATION OF BOOK OF REVELATION, SAYS UNIVERSITY OF DAYTON AUTHOR

There's a central message to the Book of Revelation, but it's not the apocalyptic tales of doom and destruction that foretell the end of time and the second coming of Jesus, says the Rev. Bertrand A. Buby, S.M., author of the forthcoming *A Journey Through Revelation: A Message for the Millennium* (\$10.95 paperback, Alba House, Staten Island, N.Y.). "If you just read the parts that have been exploited, the apocalyptic bits, you'll get a negative message. So whenever you read the Book of Revelation, you should read it all in one sitting," he says. "Then you'll get the primary message: Worship God."

Interpretations that focus on isolated passages — such as the seven seals, the figure 666, famine, plagues, earthquakes and the selection of the saved — are taking symbolic passages and applying them to historical figures and occurrences, says Buby, assistant professor of religious studies and research associate of the Marian Library-International Marian Research Institute at UD. "That's a glaring mistake," he says. "People have exploited the symbolic images in Revelation for subjective prophetic reasons, for sensationalism and even for movie themes, as for *End of Days*, *Omega Code* and even *Dogma*."

Buby suggests looking at the hopeful messages in the text. "I think the figure of the woman descending from heaven on the new Jerusalem is the centerpiece of the Book of Revelation," he says. "She is the sign of hope. She is surrounded by the sun, which is a symbol of God's protection of her, and she is also protected when there is a time of crisis. The woman is primarily a symbol for the church."

For media interviews, contact **Father Bert Buby** at (937) 229-3286 or via e-mail at buby@checkov.hm.udayton.edu. His new book is expected to be published in January or February.